

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS:

The attached Replacement sheet of drawings including Figure 7 replaces the original sheet containing Figure 7. Approval and entry are respectfully requested.

Attachment: one (1) Replacement sheet

REMARKS

I. Introduction

With the cancellation of claims 11 to 14, claims 10 and 15 to 18 are currently pending in the present application, since claims 1 to 9 were previously canceled. In view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all of the presently pending claims are allowable, and reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested.

Applicants note with appreciation the acknowledgement of the claim for foreign priority and the indication that all certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

Applicants thank the Examiner for considering the previously filed Information Disclosure Statement, PTO-1449 paper, and cited references. With respect to the references disclosed in the prior Information Disclosure Statement, which were apparently not provided by the International Search Authority, Applicants submitted on December 6, 2007 a Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement and PTO-1449 paper, which includes previously disclosed courtesy copies of the references. Accordingly, no fees are believed to be due.

II. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating that claims 14 to 16 include allowable subject matter. In this regard, the Examiner will note that each of claims 10 and 18 has been amended herein without prejudice to include the subject matter of claim 14 and that claims 15 and 16 have been amended to depend from claim 18. It is therefore respectfully submitted that claims 10 (and its dependent claims 15 to 17) and 18 are in condition for immediate allowance.

III. Objection to the Drawings

The Examiner has objected to the drawings because of an asserted typographical error. Applicants have amended the drawings to obviate the present objection. Withdrawal of the objection to the drawings is therefore respectfully requested.

IV. Objection to the Abstract

The Examiner has objected to the Abstract for including more than 150 words. Applicants have amended the Abstract to obviate the present objection. Withdrawal of the objection to the Abstract is therefore respectfully requested.

V. Rejection of Claim 18 Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, ¶ 2

Claim 18 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, ¶ 2 as assertedly indefinite. While Applicants do not necessarily agree with the merits of this rejection, claim 18 has been amended herein without prejudice to obviate the present rejection.

Withdrawal of this indefiniteness rejection is therefore respectfully requested.

VI. Rejection of Claims 10 to 13, 17, and 18 Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 11 to 13 have been canceled herein without prejudice, thereby rendering moot the present rejection with respect to claims 11 to 13. Each of claims 10 and 18 has been amended herein without prejudice to include subject matter of claim 14, which has been indicated to be allowable, thereby rendering moot the present rejection with respect to claims 10 (and its dependent claims, e.g., claim 17) and 18. Withdrawal of this rejection is therefore respectfully requested.

VII. Subject Matter of Claims as Previously Presented

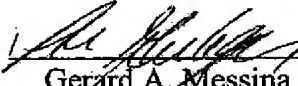
Applicants reserve the right to pursue the subject matter of the claims as previously presented in a continuation patent application. Further, any disclaimer that may have occurred during the prosecution of this application is expressly rescinded as regards any subsequently filed patent application.

VIII. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that all of pending claims 10 and 15 to 18 are allowable. It is therefore respectfully requested that the objections and rejections be withdrawn. Prompt reconsideration and allowance of the present application are therefore respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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